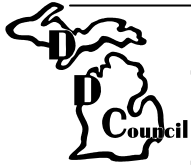


The



Monday Update

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Michigan Partners on the road for Self-Determination

What started as an idea less than two years ago has blossomed into a very active project that is presently making an appearance in selected Michigan cities this year.

More than a dozen Michigan advocates met at the Center for Self-Determination's 2004 Immersion Learning event in Atlanta. They agreed to bring back the tactics learned in Atlanta with the idea of establishing a movement with enough grit to open doors and create demand. The idea is now an alliance of Michigan Partners for Freedom. It's purpose? To create demand among people with

disabilities and their families for a life based on the principles of self-determination.

Michigan Partners is supported by the DD Council and the Arc Michigan. The project coordinator is Tammy Finn, parent of a child with developmental disabilities and Partners in Policymaking Graduate of Class 1998, who began her work last November.

Since then Finn has been very busy. Her basic task is to “connect with communities to provide training for people with developmental disabilities and family members.” Finn and other Partners provide an all-day session of information, materials and focus, held with collaboration with other advocates and agencies. Each meeting is tailored to fit the needs and resources of the particular community to reach a wider audience.

Grassroots benefits

“Our objective is to give people an understanding of just what self determination is and the tools needed to achieve it,” Finn states. The gathering uses the benefits of grassroots communication to get out the word about self-determination. While training is the key of a community gathering, communication is a two-street and those attending are encouraged to provide input on the methods and objectives of achieving self-determination.

Finn says all this activities naturally attracts the attention of services providers who may also attend the training

session. Have consumers and providers at the same meeting help create bridges toward self-determination. “Both parties then know what is needed,” says Finn. “This has a very powerful effect.”

This traveling training program is an idea that came from a series of Michigan Partners’ meetings and provided to the Council in a work plan.

So far, Finn has presented with Pat Carver, an advocate with ties to the Center for Self-Determination - holding training sessions in Kalamazoo – where more than 40 attended – Grand Rapids (with 70 attending), and Allegan (better than 25 showed up there). Format mechanics include a presentation – “what is a good life and what can my life be?” – exercises, and tools for self-determination, which also takes the form of a presentation.

Tools and a breakout session

These tools include an individual budget, an independent support broker and a fiscal intermediary. Also on the agenda is a breakout session devoted to Michigan Partners for Freedom, how to become a part of it, and how to create demand in a partner’s own community.

Finn also shows an excellent video documentary that follows a woman as she achieves self-determination. The focus is on the approach, the process, the paperwork and the providers. Finn says the video is scheduled for

showing on public television in Grand Rapids. It was created by the Kent County Arc and the DD Council.

When the Partners program wraps up a day-long session and “leaves town,” left behind is much more than the foundation for demanding a life centered around self-determination; each of the three initial sessions has produced what Finn calls grassroots “champions.” These are self-advocates who will act as a “point person in their communities, promote self-determination, and train the trainer while promoting Michigan Partners’ objectives.” As a follow-up, Partners champions will be given additional training to continue the community outreach begun by the project.

Still on the road

Where are the next stops for the Partners’ program? The schedule and counties so far are:

Manistee/Benzie (rescheduled due to an ice storm) – April

Genesee – April

Oakland – May

St. Clair – May

Lenawee – May / June

Clinton/Ingham/Eaton – sometime in summer

Lake/Mason/Oceana – in the works

Sites are determined by identifying an area in need and by an invitation from local advocates.

Finn and Partners are also busy getting ready for the 9th Annual Michigan Self-Determination Conference in Lansing, June 12 and 13. The Partners will sponsor a rally and provide two breakout sessions.

Michigan Partners will also be at the Arc Michigan's annual meeting in Muskegon, June 22 through June 24.

Finn also reports she is collaborating with Regional Interagency Consumer Committees (RICCs) to "get the word out and identify local champions."

For more on the outreach and Michigan Partners for Freedom, contact Finn at the Arc Michigan: 800-292-7851, extension 106. She splits her time between there and Grand Rapids, so feel free to leave a message. Even better is an email address: tammy@arcmi.org.

Annual DD Conference scheduled for later this month

The Michigan Department of Community Health is holding its 22nd Annual Developmental Disabilities Conference on April 25 and 26. Conference site is the Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center in East Lansing.

The conference will focus on issues related to healthcare, social, community, and educational services that are of critical importance to the futures of people with

developmental disabilities. The target audience is the DD professional.

For registration information contact the Office of Continuing Medical Education at the MSU Kalamazoo Center for Medical Studies. Their phone number is 269-337-4234 or email cme@kcms.msu.edu.

Lloyd “Bud” Kraft, Council’s deputy director, retires after 28 years

Lloyd “Bud” Kraft, the DD Council’s deputy director since 1992, former Council member, has retired. He began his career with the state in 1978.



The new retiree now expects to spend more time fishing and sailing the waters of Hamlin Lake, near Ludington, in his boat.

Kraft came to the Council from the Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns, where he was also deputy director.

We wish Bud well in his retirement.

Voter rights can help you in the booth

In this election year, it is important to remember that the law says it is alright to have someone assist a person in the voting booth if he or she needs help casting a ballot.

The Michigan Secretary of State (SOS) operates the elections throughout the state. If you are a person with a disability and need help, workers at the poll must help you.

It says as much on the SOS website, if you would like to see it for yourself: <http://www.michigan.gov/sos/> - click on:

1. "Elections in Michigan," (over at the left)
2. "Voter Information Center" (in the center, fifth icon down)
3. "Voting Information" (center, near the bottom of the page – go about half way down the page to the paragraph "Accessibility Voting."

Under "Accessibility Voting," it says "If you require voting assistance, ask the election workers for help; a reason for the needed assistance does not have to be stated." Just tell them you need help voting.

If you choose, “Two inspectors will assist you in the voting station.” But, says the web page, if you bring somebody with you, they can help you vote. That includes a support person, friend, or spouse. It doesn’t necessarily have to be your guardian. It can be anyone you choose. The SOS web page states, “An elector who is blind, disabled, or unable to read or write may be assisted with his or her ballot by any person of the voter's choice, except the following: the voter's employer or agent of that employer, or an officer or agent of a union to which the voter belongs.”

It is possible you may be challenged. A poll worker may say no, you can’t have anyone other than an election working (inspector) helping you to vote. Solutions:

- (1) Contact your city or township clerk to tell them the policy as it reads on the SOS website;
- (2) (2) Print and take a copy of the SOS’s “Voting Information” page with you to show the worker; and
- (3) Take along the phone numbers of legal hotlines (yet to be established – Monday Update will print them when they are announced), and the phone number of Michigan Protection & Advocacy Service (1-800-288-5923) that will be available to help on Election Day. If you run into a problem, have the worker make the phone call.

Election reminders: (1) Register, register, register to vote! (2) Election dates are Aug. 3 for the primary election, and Nov. 2 for the general election. (3) Make certain your voting location is accessible.

Council committee and work group meeting minutes

Education Work Group Minutes

Jan. 17, 2006

Attendance: Jane Spitzley, Karen Massaro-Mundt, Glenn Ashley

Phone: Andre Robinson, Carolyn Das, Barb LeRoy, Marta Hampel, Lauri Stein

1.) Approval of December 6 Minutes

Carolyn moved, Andre seconded, to approve the minutes. They were approved.

2.) Announcements – None

3.) Education Summit and Universal Education

Carolyn will not be able to pull the Summit together as planned for March 21, due in large part to changes in her personal circumstances.

Carolyn recommends that the Summit be postponed until October, if we do the Summit as planned. She has a tentative date on hold for October 12.

The work group concurred that we could do a more effective job that way. It would give more time to prepare the briefing book and also get the team leaders together.

The group agreed that we should do something in March to follow up on the framework approved by the state board.

We decided to do a mini-summit with the Core Team, Education Work group, and a few other people to get more detailed plan for a fall summit, more like a rehearsal.

We also can strategize about the ideas that we have already, and plan the next steps.

The board is expecting to hear from the Dept about the next steps on the framework at the February meeting. This would probably be the glossary, and how to move the framework down to the local level. No one that we know of from the original referent group has been called in to be involved in it. We may want to address the information reported to the state board.

We need to be sure someone from the Department can be there. We should invite Jacquelyn Thompson, and hear from her. Jane is not available March 21, so we need a different day. March 29 and 31 were suggested.

Carolyn will contact Mark, Jane, and Jacquelyn, and if those dates don't work, we will circulate an email.

The Lansing Community College is the preferred location. The time recommended is 10:00 am to 3:00 pm.

4.) DD Council meeting program for March 14, 2006
After discussion, we agreed on the following plan.
11:00-12:00 Universal Education portion

Start with an update on where Universal Education is, and what the state board is doing. Suggest Mark do this part. Glenn check with him, on his schedule.

We will present information about possible strategies that have been suggested to date.

We will then brainstorm to gather ideas from the RICCs and Council for additional strategies. We would not need to make any commitments on what we would do with the information. Glenn will serve as recorder, Carolyn and Karen facilitating.

1:00-2:00 Positive behavioral supports – a solution to the problems of seclusion, restraint, suspension and other punishment.

Marta and Lauri will find a parent to share a story and find someone from outside the group with solution expertise, with Mark's input as need. Rep Lipsey has talked about possible legislation. Glenn will need presenters' names by Feb. 6.

2:00 to 2:30 Grantee presentations 10 minutes:

Everyone Together – Lauri Stein

Early Childhood Inclusion – Esther Onaga or Roz Kirk. Glenn will contact them.

We previously planned to do an update on IDEA regulations. With the delays, it is a lower priority than other items.

We need to accommodate the needs of the audience that day, to make it accessible in every way. There are really no resources on how to do that. It would give us a chance to practice for doing that for the Summit.

5.) Updates

- State Board of Education. The Dept website said that a brochure and packet for widespread distribution is supposed to be ready by mid-February on Universal Education. The State Board may be considering this on Feb. 14.
- Detroit Public Schools issues. A group of advocacy organizations will be having a dozen trainings for parents between now and May.
- **DD Council letter to MDE re Referent Group report – Carolyn is preparing the draft letter.**
- **IDEA regulations will be delayed, perhaps until June.**
- **Accessible Meetings.**

All the materials were done in large print for the Council meeting. It does not need to be in large print for everyone, just for the people who need the accommodations.

Materials on dark color paper were a problem.

Having people who needed assistance get lunch first has been very helpful.

It is hard to hold a wrap in one hand. Something that could be cut up would be easier.

Karen will request that the committee on accessible meetings meet again to review responses to the last couple council meetings.

6.) Next regular meeting – February 21, 2006.

We will cancel the March 21 meeting because of the meetings the week before and after.

A special meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 24, from 1 to 3 pm, to consider plan recommendations for the DD Council 2007-2011 state plan. Glenn will send the information again.

Health Issues Work Group

Jan. 17, 2006

Members present: Theresa Arini (phone), Mary Marin, Linda Melaragni

Guests present: Dawn Robarge (Center for Disability Services), Linda Potter (UCP Michigan), Bonnie Sumbler, Ed Glazer and Tom Lietz (Message Makers)

Staff present: Terry Hunt

Members introduced themselves.

Members reviewed and approved the minutes as distributed.

Ideas, suggestions, comments regarding Faces of Medicaid:

- Members felt comfortable with the populations and topic areas Linda Potter listed in her document (previously distributed via e-mail.)
- Interview Dr. Alexander as part of our baseline information regarding Medicaid, but request that he not use term "gold standard".

- The care coordination sites might be a good resource regarding potential interviewees.
- Medical Services Administration has produced a CD titled Faces of Medicaid that primarily addresses physician/provider concerns.

We want our video to be a resource for disability advocates to inform their network (church, community group, civic group, policy makers, etc.) about the importance of Medicaid and to build support for Medicaid.

Since a video is already titled “Faces of Medicaid”, we will need a different name for our video. Bonnie suggested we deal with this in the future because a title frequently is suggested from comments offered during filming.

- Members discussed work group intent with the companion document referenced in UCP deliverables. We want: potential questions the facilitator can ask people who watch the video to stimulate discussion; next steps for advocacy. Linda said she can develop this document within the current budget of \$5000.
- UCP and Message Maker will need to coordinate travel schedules when we film.

- Message Makers will assist council staff in drafting communication we include with PSAs and send to radio and television stations. The DD Council will package and mail the CD, companion document, etc. as well as the PSA material.

Timelines:

- UCP will locate, screen and schedule potential interviewees in March and April.
- Message Makers timeline is somewhat flexible and will work with UCP to coordinate.

Dawn reported that several states have been working on care coordination issues.

Family Support Work Group

Feb. 15, 2006

Members Present: Lori Goike, Jackie Igafo-Te'o, Carolyn Allston-Smith, Tracy Vincent

Guests: Dee Florence

Welcome and introductions were done.

One change to the minutes: Motion to approve the January 18, 2006 minutes should have been September 21, 2005 minutes. Tracy noted the change. Carolyn motioned to approve the January 18, 2006 minutes. Jackie seconded. Motion approved.

Announcements/Legislative Updates

- Autism Society of Michigan Focus Workshops will be held Spring 2006.
- Positive Parenting with a Plan: Helping to Empower Parents with FAMILY Rules is being held February 27 in Lansing
- Weiner Associates legislative updates will no longer be available at each FSWG meeting. The updates can be found on the following websites:
 - o www.autism-mi.org
 - o www.arcmi.org

Discuss Family, Unisex Bathrooms

The group has decided to do some advocacy work on this issue instead of creating a potential project at this time. Tracy has done research on this issue and disseminated it to the members. Michigan Code requires in assembly of mercantile occupancies an accessible unisex toile room shall be provided where an aggregate of six or more male and female water closets is required. The group will do some more research on this issue and will send letters to the central office of larger companies.

Planning for the Future Project

The group came up with several ideas on how to create a project around the issue of Planning for the Future. The main focus is to target children with special needs that includes all cultures. Following are the ideas the group agreed on:

- Pilot Project to see how it works

- Connect grantee with 6 RICCs (Upper Peninsula, Western, Eastern, Tri-County, Thumb area, Northern) to give them a starting point. The RICCS could lead them to critical agencies to disseminate information through.
- Grantee research resources on future planning with approval from the FSWG and Multicultural Committee
- Compile information into packets (available in multiple ways- translated, internet, CDs, etc.)
- First contact with RICC – RICC to identify critical agencies to disseminate information as a starting point)
- Population assessment/Survey
- Have a couple interactive workshops where they would have hands on experience writing a plan, Letter of Intent, etc. (something they can take home)

The Arc of Western Wayne County is already doing workshops. Tracy will contact them to see if this is something we can build from.

We will schedule a subcommittee meeting to discuss this further with the Multicultural Committee.

Family Gathering

Two pavilions have been reserved this year. Tracy will send out letters to the vendors shortly. The activities that the members agreed upon include:

- Necklace Station
- All About Me
- Play Dough
- Water Balloon Toss
- Airplane Making
- Bingo
- Decorate Visors
- Make Stress Balls

Carolynne will contact LAP Respite Center to see if workers will be available that day. She will also check on prizes for adults.

Our Community Includes Everyone



**Michigan Developmental
Disabilities Council**

